SECTION I—CLAIMS

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Claims 1-2, 6-15, 18-19, and 21-22 are amended herein. Claims 17 and 20 are canceled herein without prejudice. No new claims are added. Claims 1-16, 18-19, and 21-23 remain pending in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

intercepting a request ~~from a user~~ for a web page <u>from a user device</u>, the user <u>device</u> connected

<u>with</u> ~~to~~ a blocked port of a packet forwarding device, the blocked port preventing the user

<u>device</u> from accessing a network coupled to the forwarding device;

directing the user <u>device</u> to a network login page <u>for authentication;</u>

<u>attempting to authenticate</u> ~~authenticating~~ the user <u>device based on input received at the network</u>

<u>login page;</u> ~~and~~

<u>sending an unblock port command to unblock the blocked port, when attempting to authenticate</u>

<u>the user device based on input received at the network login page results in a positive</u>

<u>authentication response; and</u>

allowing the user <u>device</u> to access the network when the <u>blocked port is unblocked.</u> ~~user is~~

~~authenticated.~~

2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein intercepting a request from [[a]] <u>the</u> user

<u>device</u> comprises intercepting a HyperText Transfer Protocol (HTTP) request from the

user <u>device</u>.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising receiving a Domain Name Service (DNS) request to translate a domain name specified in the HTTP request into an Internet Protocol (IP) address.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, further comprising proxying the DNS request to a DNS server.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, further comprising receiving a response from the DNS server with a DNS-resolved IP address.

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising sending the DNS-resolved IP address to the user device.

7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 6, further comprising intercepting a request from the user device directed to the DNS-resolved IP address.

8. (Currently amended) The method of claim 7, wherein directing the user device to a network login page for authentication comprises responding to the user device with a redirect to a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) address for the network login page.

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8, further comprising receiving a DNS request from the user device to translate a domain name for the network login page into an IP address.

10. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9, further comprising responding to the user device with the IP address of the packet forwarding device.

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim 10, further comprising receiving from the user device, a request to the IP address of the packet forwarding device.

12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, further comprising responding to the user device with the network login page.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[12]] 1, further comprising receiving an

authentication request from the user <u>device via the network login page, the authentication</u> <u>request comprising</u> ~~with~~ user identification data.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 13, wherein <u>attempting to authenticate</u> ~~authenticating~~ the user <u>device based on input received at the network login page</u> comprises parsing the authentication request and forwarding the authentication request to an authentication server.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 14, wherein parsing the authentication request and forwarding the authentication request to [[an]] <u>the</u> authentication server comprises creating a packet with the user identification data in accordance with the RADIUS communications protocol and forwarding the RADIUS packet to a RADIUS server.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising receiving a response from the RADIUS server to indicate whether the user identification data is authentic.

17. (Canceled).

18. (Currently amended) An apparatus comprising:

a packet forwarding device coupled <u>with</u> ~~to~~ a network, the packet forwarding device having a blocked port, the blocked port to prevent a user <u>device</u> connected <u>with</u> ~~to~~ the blocked port from accessing the network until the user <u>device</u> is authenticated; and

an authenticator discovery controller coupled <u>with</u> ~~to~~ the packet forwarding device<u>, the</u> <u>authenticator discovery controller</u> to<u>:</u>

intercept a request ~~from the user~~ for a web page <u>from the user device,</u> ~~and~~

direct the user <u>device</u> to a network login page for authentication<u>,</u>

<u>attempt to authenticate the user device based on input received at the network login page,</u> <u>and</u>

send an unblock port command to unblock the blocked port, when the attempt to

authenticate the user device based on input received at the network login page

results in a positive authentication response.

19. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the attempt to authenticate the user

device based on input received at the network login page comprises further comprising a

network login controller coupled with to the packet forwarding device to attempt to

authenticate the user device based on input received at the network login page and send

the positive authentication response to the authenticator discovery controller and allow

the user to access the network when the user device is successfully authenticated.

20. (Canceled).

21. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the unblock port command to

unblock the blocked port originates at the network login controller. to unblock the

blocked port of the packet forwarding device when the user is authenticated.

22. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the authenticator discovery

controller to further:

receive a Domain Name Service (DNS) request from the user device, and to

proxy the DNS request to a DNS server to translate a domain name into an Internet Protocol (IP)

address.

23. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the packet forwarding device is a switch.